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SUBJECT: VENEZUELA: UN MEETING PRESENTS COUNTERNARCOTICS  
ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITY

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Darnall Steuart  
for Reason 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (U) This is an Action Request. See Paragraph 4.

¶2. (SBU) From September 28-October 2, 2009, the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (GBRV) will host the 19th meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean (HONLEA), for the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) in Isla Margarita, Venezuela. The agenda includes major regional drug trafficking trends and countermeasures; a round table on drug trafficking between Latin American and Africa; and a working group on effective border management at sea container terminals.

¶3. (C) President Hugo Chavez is unlikely to pass up an opportunity to trumpet Venezuela's counternarcotics (CN) accomplishments in front of representatives from Latin America and the Caribbean. He is also likely to attack U.S. counterdrug policies in the region as an attempt to overthrow his and other "Bolivarian" governments. Colonel Nestor Reverol, Director of Venezuela's National Anti-Drug Office (ONA) will also be in attendance.

¶4. (C) Post understands that DEA Regional Director Bergman intends to participate in the HONLEA. Post would welcome s Director Bergman's participation. Post strongly recommends the designation of a Washington based official to head the delegation. The possibility of developing bilateral meetings on the side of this conference would be greatly enhanced with a representative from Washington rather than Bogota. Ambassador Duddy requests that he also be accredited as a member of the U.S. delegation.  
DUDDY